



CONGRESSIONAL HEARING RESUME

106th Congress

Date: 8 March 2000

SUBJECT: Hearing on Sustaining the All-Volunteer Force and the Reserve Component

**COMMITTEE: House Armed Services
 Subcommittee on Military Personnel**

CHAIRMAN: The Honorable Steve Buyer (R-IN)

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), Robin Hayes (R-NC), Mac Thornberry (R-TX), and Loretta Sanchez (D-CA)

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Date: 8 Mar 00

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Panel Members

Panel 1 - GAO

1. Norman J. Rabkin, Director for National Security Preparedness Issues

Panel 2 - Senior Personnel Leadership, OSD & Service

1. Secretary Rudy de Leon, USD, Personnel & Readiness, OSD
2. LTG David Ohle, DCS PER, USA
3. VADM Norbert Ryan, CNP, USN
4. Lt Gen Jack Klimp, DCS MRA, USMC
5. Lt Gen Donald Peterson, DP, USAF

Panel 3 - Senior Reserve Affairs Leadership, OSD & Service

1. Secretary Charles L. Cragin, Acting Asst Secty of Defense for Reserve Affairs
2. Lt Gen Russell C. Davis, USAF, Chief, National Guard Bureau
3. MG Roger C. Schultz, USA, Director, Army National Guard
4. MG Thomas J. Plewes, USA, Commander, US Army Reserve
5. RADM John B. Totushek, USN, Commander US Navy Reserve
6. Maj Gen Paul A. Weaver, USAF, Director, Air National Guard

7. Maj Gen James E. Sherrard III, Commander, US Air Force Reserve Command
8. Maj Gen David M. Mize, USMC, Commander, US Marine Corps Reserve
9. RADM R. Dennis Sirois, USCG, Commander, US Coast Guard Reserve

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Subcommittee focused on understanding the challenges that our military forces face in today's toughest recruiting environment. A thriving sustained economy and decreased military footprint have made for challenging times in recruiting for an all-volunteer force. CM Buyer's opening statement outlined his personal assessment of the retention and recruiting issues for each service as well as their respective guard and reserve components. His statement outlined in very detailed data points what's

He cited the direct correlation between recruiting and retention and the inability of the services to fund the recruiting budget in a timely manner. He projected a 'recruiting flop' if the services didn't do a better job in managing this issue. CM Buyer was very upset when he returned after three lengthy votes and floor action to find the members of panel 2 were dismissed without the opportunity to ask them questions. CM Buyer is concerned about the Reserve Component and the uneven distribution of the Department's budget.

The Subcommittee was called to order at 1335.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Buyer:

Welcomed the witnesses before the committee. Mr. Buyer made a very lengthy (22 minutes) opening statement to cover the importance of this hearing--Sustaining the All Volunteer Force. This is a national challenge and one the committee takes very seriously. He covered the entire spectrum of personnel issues to include the serious problems each of the Services is having in recruiting and retention. Spoke on the increasing use of the Reserve Components (RC) and their essential contributions to peacetime and contingency operations and asked each of the RC Chiefs to identify their unfunded priorities. He pointed out several discrepancies in the Air Force's recruiting budget. With the problems the Air Force is having he could not understand how we would decrease our recruiting budget. Lt Gen Peterson clarified these numbers during his opening statement. He reiterated again the valuable service and the military and the concern the committee has with sustaining an All-Volunteer Force

CM Thornberry:

Focus of his questions was on the GAO Survey Results (Military Quality of Life and Retention). He asked Sec deLeon if the Services plan to implement any of the findings in this report.

CM Hayes:

The Services are doing their part in educating the American public on the valuable contributions of today's military. CM Hayes was very concerned of forthright that members of Congress need an attitude adjustment and start doing our part. We all travel and hear the complaints and comments from the military members and now we need do our part in supporting the year of the troops."

CW Sanchez:

Two questions that focused on the domestic violence taskforce directed by the FY00 NDAA. Also, she was very interested in how the military educates their members on their entitlements--active duty entitlements as well as retirement.

WITNESS STATEMENTS

Mr. deLeon and each DCS Personnel provided opening statement. Each statement covered the same basic concerns facing the services today in recruiting and retaining an all-volunteer force that will be the future leaders of tomorrow's military. Gen Peterson was the only witness to ask for the support of members of Congress by acting as recruiters for the military. He went on to ask their constituents to consider military service as a form of national service. The military footprint is smaller, influencers are down (relatives that have served in the military, counselors, friends, etc.) and their support would help spread the military story.

GEN WEAVERS OPENING STATEMENT

- Spoke on last year being a wake-up call for the ANG in terms of slipping retention rates; provided an update to the bonus for Technician pilots; the need for more aggressive recruiting; and unfunded priorities of \$22M (for incentives, advertising, and additional recruiters).

GEN SHERRARDS OPENING STATEMENT

- Discussed that despite good accession numbers, overall manning was down 200 people; funding MGIB kicker initiative and tuition assistance out-of-hide; the need for Technician pilot bonus; unfunded priorities of \$31.5M (personnel accounts); and having a recruiter shortfall.

KEY COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, AND ANSWERS

- **CM Buyer's** opening statement was very lengthy. The GAO provided opening statements and answered numerous questions. Panel 2, Mr. DeLeon and the DCSPers provided opening statements and Mr. DeLeon fielded ~ 5 questions. CM Pickett dismissed the panel due to additional votes.
- **Mr Buyer** noted that RC recruiting budgets in FY01 PB is \$168M below that appropriated last FY. He asked the RC chiefs what would be the impact if they did not receive any help from Congress on their shortfalls. Gen Weaver indicated that reprogramming from training/schools accounts would have to be used as offsets to fund recruiting. **Gen Sherrard** said endstrength would continue to decline and retention initiatives would go unmet.
- **Mr Buyer** expressed dismay with this shortfall and the Air Force's approach, which assumes the recruiting goal, will not be met, and yet the requirements are not being funded. **Gen Sherrard** stated if the right number could be pushed up by a year, it would be 50 more recruiters
- **Mr Buyer** asked if the support the RCs had received from Congress was an impediment to incorporating needed funding within their active services' budgets. **Sec Cragin** responded that it was an issue of 'who blinked first.' Services have adopted the position that Congress will fill any shortfalls in funding for the RCs.

: Finished by rhetorically asking if the RCs were in danger of becoming a professional peacekeeping force.

The hearing concluded at 1805.